

APPROVED 04/09/2009

At 6:10 pm Chairman Gates called the meeting to order in the basement meeting room at the Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Greta St Germain, Brett Hunter, and Donald W Gates Jr; and Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 26 March 2009. Hunter had submitted some updates and corrections which were reviewed and acceptable by all. Hunter moved to approve the minutes with the amendments. St Germain seconded and the vote unanimously approved 3-0.

2. Carlson updated the Board with regard to updates from the School Board. Their representative to the Selectmen is Jeff Rowell; and the Selectmen's representative to School Board is Greta St Germain. Rowell is the School Board Chairman. There was discussion about how the representative relationship should work between the Boards, and it was suggested that once the School Board gets through the principal interviews that Rowell be invited to a Board meeting to get the Boards communicating about current issues.

There was also discussion about the budget report received from the SAU Office and how the School makes requests for funding to the Town.

3. A review indicates that there was a word missing on a couple of the appointment forms signed for Board members to be Selectmen's Ex-Officio members and alternate members to the Planning Board and Budget Committee. Thus, appointments dated 03/19/09 were updated and re-signed as of 04/02/09 for:

Brett A Hunter as Selectmen's Ex-Officio Alternate Member of the Budget Committee through March 2012; Greta St Germain as Selectmen's Ex-Officio Alternate Member of the Budget committee through March 2011; Brett A Hunter as Selectmen's Ex-Officio Member of the Planning Board through March 2012; Greta St Germain as Selectmen's Ex-Officio Alternate Member of the Planning Board through March 2011

4. A new appointment form is needed for Donald W Gates Jr to be the Selectmen's Ex-Officio Alternate Member of the Planning Board, so one was prepared through the end of Gates' term, ending March 2010. Hunter moved to designate Donald W Gates Jr as an Alternate Selectmen's Ex-Officio Member of the Planning Board. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

5. An Adjudicative Hearing has been set by NH PELRB on the Teamsters petition. The initial hearing date is set for April 20, 2009. The Town's Attorney is out of state at that time and will file to see if an alternate date can be set. Selectmen reviewed the Town's return petition on the information presented by the Teamsters including make-up of the proposed union, and Selectmen signed a return "petition." Selectmen signed a second filing updating the employment status from the employee listing, originally submitted to the NH PELRB.

At 6:30 pm Jeff Schieding came in to the meeting. Motion was made by Gates to enter non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss a tax hardship matter. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved on a roll call vote 3-0.

At 6:45 pm Gates moved to return to public session. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved by roll call vote 2-0. Hunter left the meeting for a family emergency at 6:37 pm.

Mr Schieding left the meeting at 6:45 pm. Selectmen took a brief recess.

At 6:55 pm the meeting reconvened and Emergency Management Director Aaron Epstein came forward. There were no other Department Heads present this evening.

Epstein and St Germain were introduced. He said that he was currently working on one grant, in its early stages, which is due by May 30. This was the one the Town encumbered our share of in 2008. He said he was going to be starting a second one in the next couple of weeks for the update to the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. This grant is in conjunction with the Rockingham Planning Commission. He said it would be an update to the existing plan and a review to see what has changed or been mitigated since it was initially written.

Epstein said he had long-term plans to see what we can do to get a grant for a generator at Ellis School, as that is the best and most logical location for a shelter. Carlson reminded all that there are parts of two large generators at the Town Hall that were obtained at no cost, in hopes they could make a viable set-up at Ellis.

Gates then moved to appoint Aaron Epstein as the Town's Emergency Management Director for one year through March 2010. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

The Board then discussed a meeting with State DES representatives to review the dams in Fremont (and possibly in Brentwood). Epstein is planning to set this up, and will notify Carlson as to the date and time if Selectmen decide to attend.

Epstein left the meeting at 7:10 pm to take his appointment form to the Clerk and be sworn in.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the payroll manifest \$21,202.58 and accounts payable manifest \$522,112.12 for current week (dated 03/31/09 to close out March). Motion was made by Gates to approve the payroll manifest in the amount of \$21,205.58. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0. Gates then moved to approve the accounts payable manifest of \$522,112.12.

2. Selectmen reviewed the accounts payable manifest \$25,996.09 (reviewed and approved last week, but not printed) for March 27, 2009. Some of the invoices were held over from last week due to the check problems. Gates moved to approve this manifest. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

3. Selectmen reviewed an Intent to Excavate filed by John Galloway for parcel 05-035 on Shirkin Road in Fremont. With the form in order, motion was made by Gates and seconded by St Germain to approve the form. The vote was approved 2-0.

4. Selectmen reviewed a request from Tina Sturdivant on behalf of the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee to use the Town Hall on Saturday May 16, 2009 from 8:00 am to 10:00 am for the annual vernal pool workshop. Selectmen reviewed the form, approved, and signed it for the proposed use. Key pickup shall be the Friday prior; with the key left off in the mailbox in the Town Hall on Saturday after opening the building.

5. Rick Lothian called this week to inform the Board he knew someone interested in assisting the Town with the North Road stone wall project (labor only). The contractor (Rich Levine) had not bid on the project the first time around. He was asked to leave contact information if interested in being contacted again.

6. The Selectmen discussed drafting a follow-up letter to the Town's insurance agent. The letter will be prepared for review and signature next week.

7. Carlson shared with the Board a request from Mike Nygren for information to be available at the Budget Committee meeting next week. Department heads have assisted in this endeavor and most of the information should be available for Wednesday's meeting.

8. Selectmen reviewed Elderly Exemptions and the information submitted therewith. The determinations for eligibility had also been reviewed by Jeanne Nygren and Heidi Carlson:

Robert & Marilyn Bolton 53 Tarah Way 03-002.002.26B
Motion was made by Gates and seconded by St Germain to deny this application as the applicants are ineligible as over-income qualified per information submitted. The vote was approved 2-0.

Harold & Elizabeth Davies 363 Main Street 03-131
Motion was made by Gates and seconded by St Germain to approve the application upon review of the information submitted. The vote was approved 2-0.

Lori Holmes came into the meeting at 7:45 pm. She swore in Gates and St Germain for the appointment forms re-signed earlier in the meeting.

Holmes was present this evening to follow-up with the Board on the balloting questions in follow-up to the recount on Risloves Way. Holmes explained that the new ballots were hand-delivered by a police officer, to those who had received an "original" absentee ballot. Holmes said that every ballot was hand-delivered by Saturday.

Holmes said that any returned ballots (ballots incorrectly printed) were not opened, as mandated by law. Any ballots received by the Clerk's Office prior to the new ballots being issued were unopened and remained sealed. These old ballots were cancelled and new ballots were received.

Holmes indicated the corrected ballot had the envelopes marked accordingly with the return information. When they come back, the new envelopes looked different, indicating it was the replacement ballot.

There was discussion about Military absentee ballots, and Holmes said they can only do State and Federal elections, and Holmes said they cannot vote in local elections. Gates asked for a copy of the statute covering military elections and Holmes said she would need to contact the Secretary of State for the information. She clarified that the military personnel can make a request on their federal post card application to make them eligible to vote in local elections.

Holmes said that absentee ballots are opened beginning at 1:00 pm on election day; and can be accepted by mail up until 5:00 pm on election day. Absentee ballots cannot be accepted in person on Election Day. In person, absentee ballots are due by 5:00 pm the prior Monday, and the Clerk is open from 3:00 to 5:00 pm the Monday before any election solely for the purpose of absentee balloting.

There was a discussion about checks and balances for absentee ballots and how they are accounted for and handled. Holmes explained the process in detail.

Holmes assured the Board that all of the incorrect ballots that went out were replaced with new ballots and those ballots (which had already been sent back) were returned with the replacement ballot.

Holmes said that she is required to account for all ballots (both the incorrectly printed ones and the new ones). The incorrect ballots were sealed up and cancelled and the new ballots were used on election day.

There was only a three day turn-around to get the new (corrected) ballots done. Gates questioned if we have a review process in place so that this type of event does not happen again. Holmes said that this was the first ballot mistake she has made in 11 years.

Holmes explained how she keeps the voting records, included is a spreadsheet of absentee ballots, and accountability for “in and out” for every election.

Holmes then reviewed with the Board the revised Town Clerk budget based on the default budget total. She reviewed line items as she has appropriated them as follows:

Line Item	Description	Budget
4130-045	TC Town Clerk Salary	34,700
4130-046	TC Deputy Town Clerk Wages	17,186
4130-050	TC Records Restoration	1,250
4130-051	TC Office Equipment	600
4130-052	TC Office Supplies	1,500
4130-053	TC Postage & Envelopes	3,300
4130-055	TC Dues & Conferences	650
4130-056	TC Computer Software & Support	1,700
4130-060	TC Reference & Law Books	250
4130-061	TC Mileage	600
	Total Town Clerk	\$61,736

This total is \$225 less than her original default budget, and those funds will go toward other shortages.

Holmes then began to discuss E-Reg, an online vehicle re-registration program that she has been investigating for about a year. She thinks it is a good idea for residents and will make the renewal registration process even easier. She indicated that some of the line item reallocations include making provisions to buy into this software program perhaps as early as June of 2009.

She explained that the customer would log into the E-Reg webstie, key in certain information, create a personal account and get a PIN number. From there, you renew your registration on the screen, pay by check debit or credit card, and proceed through to get a confirmation notice indicating that you have requested processing of your renewals and confirmation of your payment. This is NOT an actual registration and will not give you a grace period if you wait until month end to process your renewal.

She further said that the Town Clerk then logs in each day to the system to downloads the report that will show who did their request for a renewal on line. She then takes the report and it has everything the office needs to process each individual registration in the Town and State computer systems. The Clerk's Office then prints the registrations and processes the debit or credit card payments.

She explained that the bank routing number information is used to have the system create and print a check which is then deposited into the Town or State account for payment.

The Board was interested in learning more about this, and asked about the cost to the Town. Holmes said the cost is \$25 per month to the Town for the software maintenance, support and upgrades (Interware Development Company) (\$300 annual support contract). She said the Town would also have to purchase a laser printer, and ink cartridges estimated at \$69.95 to \$89.95 each. The office will also have to purchase the check stock paper. This cost is \$45 for a box of 500 pages.

Holmes said that 45-55 other NH towns are doing this and it seems to be working well. She said as part of her research that she sent out a mass email to some of these Towns and had positive feedback.

Holmes went on to say that the Clerk's Office is about services to the community, not about making money, and that she wanted to do this for convenience. She said she would need to get the word out about this, and that it could take two months to get it into full swing. She indicated that in the longer term the Clerk's Office could perhaps cut back on hours and save some money in wages/salary. She indicated she was thinking about office hours of Monday through Wednesday from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm; Thursday 12 noon to 8:00 pm; and be closed on Fridays. She said this would be 26 open hours instead of 31.

She said that all of their reporting and paperwork would still be done at the close of business, and that cutting back like this offsets the expenses involved in the program. She has calculated a 32 hour work week for the Clerk; and about 18-20 hours per week for the Deputy Clerk.

Selectmen asked about the reduction in hours/pay for office staff. Holmes said she didn't feel it was whether or not the employees could afford the reduction in hours, but, more about the needs of the residents and consideration for the economic downturn. She feels that people want to do the renewal registrations on line because of its ease and convenience.

She said the process to begin E-Reg includes preparation of legal documentation with the State and Interware; the Department of Safety downloading and processing all of the Fremont vehicle data into the Interware Software system. She said it will take 4-6 weeks to get things going.

Selectmen said they wanted to explain the business plan to the Budget Committee, including the total amount it is going to cost, and the benefits. Holmes said that the Town already collects \$1 per transaction for mail-in registrations and this would continue.

Selectmen explained that they are trying to be as transparent as possible with all of the budgetary matters given the changes and workings within the default line total.

Holmes said that Interware is also working on dog licensing, which may be in place by the end of the year, so that could also be done on line (currently available in person or by mail). Residents can also sign up for an email notice, which will save the town money in the pre-mailers.

She said that this will expand the renewal options for people to be able to do it by mail, on line, or doing it in person at the Clerk's Office.

Holmes said the website for Interware is: www.ereg.us and that you can go on and view it, and see how it works. She encouraged people to do this, indicating she thinks the possibilities of using such a system are very positive.

She said that Interware is currently running a special of a one time sign-up with the initial fee waived (\$95), which is valid through early next week. She asked the Board when she could expect a decision. Members wanted to discuss this with the Budget Committee next Wednesday and also have Hunter present for a final decision. Carlson suggested that Holmes contact the vendor and explain this, and see if the extension could be granted through next Friday when the Budget Committee had reviewed it, and the Board could be fully back together to make a decision.

Selectmen asked when she might make a decision about how and when to cut back hours. Holmes said that by law, you have to have a Deputy Town Clerk; and that she wanted to get into it and see how much less counter traffic there was.

Selectmen forecasted that the Budget Committee will ask these questions. Holmes said that once the program is up and running, they will get a good idea of the program, who is using it and how effective it is. She said she wouldn't project the cutback immediately, but was hoping to have E-Reg going by June.

Holmes listed off some towns currently using E-Reg include Derry, Epping, Litchfield, Exeter, Atkinson, Plaistow, Newton, Rochester, Londonderry, and Keene. Holmes left the meeting at 8:50 pm and thanked the Board for their time.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

9. The Board discussed the conversion to the new part-time Fire Chief salary of \$25,000. Payroll had been processed this week at the old rate as Carlson felt the Board may want to review with Butler the parameters around the new salary. Board members agreed and suggested it be discussed next week when Chief Butler is here for discussion and other Fire Rescue Department matters. A memorandum of understanding will be drafted to cover the items Chief Butler had outlined in his budget as rationale for the increases and the items he has committed to for the Town.

10. Selectmen reviewed other budgets as submitted by the Departments for allocating the default.

Line Item	Planning Board Description	Budget
4191-001	PZ Clerical	31,668
4191-002	PZ Office Supplies	1,150
4191-003	PZ Postage	2,000
4191-004	PZ Professional Services	4,700
4191-005	PZ Advertising Expense	2,500
4191-006	PZ Office Equipment	200
4191-007	PZ Recording Fees	150
4191-010	Mileage & Expense Reimb	500
4191-020	PZ Matching Grants	3,000
4191-035	PZ Training & Conferences	750
4191-109	PZ Printing	800
4191-500	PZ Circuit Rider Planner	12,375
	Total Planning Board	\$59,793

Line Item	Conservation Commission Description	Budget
4160-001	CC Photographs	20
4610-002	CC Postage	100
4160-004	CC Copies & Office Supplies	150
4160-005	CC Document Purchases	100
4160-006	CC Training & Seminars	1,000
4160-008	CC Dues & Memberships	300
4610-010	CC Conservation Improvement	1
4610-020	CC Exeter River Local Advisory Comm	150
4610-050	CC Conservation Fund	1
4610-500	CC Conservation Project	1,500
	Total Conservation Commission	\$3,322

The Parks & Recreation budget has been reviewed and submitted by Renee King to include the total of \$57,575 allocated as follows:

Line Item	Parks & Recreation Description	Budget
4520-001	PR Wages	15,815
4520-002	PR Summer Programs	2,550
4520-003	PR Bus Rental	3,500
4520-004	PR Field Maintenance	25,292
4520-008	PR Administration	480
4520-009	PR Town Events	4,938
4520-011	PR Field Trips	3,000
4520-020	PR Play Group	400
4520-102	PR Electricity	1,600
	Total Parks & Recreation	\$57,575

She indicated that this includes a slightly slimmed down summer camp program, with adjustments made as needed to the Town Events line item.

Carlson reported speaking with Thom Roy about the Building Inspection budget, and he was comfortable with the default as initially presented. The budget includes:

Line Item	Building Inspection Description	Budget
4240-001	BI Inspector Wages	43,300
4240-002	BI Heating Inspections	0
4240-004	BI Driveway Inspections	500
4240-005	BI Safety Inspections	500
4240-006	BI Office Supplies	1,000
4240-007	BI ICC / NFPA Forms	600
4240-020	BI Mileage & Expense Reimbursement	2,629
4240-027	BI Equipment & Books	750
4240-035	BI Training & Conferences	750
	Total Building Inspection	\$50,029

Selectmen discussed the items that Thom Roy is doing beyond the work for building and code enforcement, including assisting the Energy Committee, submitting grants for the Town, the Town's IT work, and now also representing the Town on the Planning Board. When Trudie Butler completes her term as Health Officer and retires in May, the position will shift to Roy.

The difference in the wage line represents the current wage rate budgeted for a full year. Roy received less retroactive pay in 2008 than he was eligible for because the 2008 budget had been calculated incorrectly (as in the executive budget) due to the update to the wage matrix to correct a math error in the spreadsheet. This does not represent a wage increase, merely a full year at the current rate of pay.

The Animal Control budget is the same as Chief Janvrin used for 2008. He has indicated that the \$150 shortfall for the NH SPCA (social service vendor payment) could be taken from the kennel line in the animal control budget so that the SPCA would get the \$600 (increased request from \$450) for 2009 to meet their request.

The Library budget request will stay the same as the 2008 allocation, according to Barbara Bassett. The numbers for all budgets are being worked into an updated budget spreadsheet for the Budget Committee.

Selectmen were comfortable with all of the budgets as presented above, and they will move forward with the presentation to the Budget Committee. The majority of budgets have been allocated, and it is a matter of including all the numbers in a final spreadsheet to get to the total default budget voted of \$2,531,763.

11. Selectmen reviewed a letter from the Planning Board, recommending Derek Downing to the Fremont Planning Board for a three year term (to fill the retirement term of Leon Holmes Jr). Carlson prepared an appointment form for the three year term. Gates moved to approve the appointment for Derek Downing to a three year term on the Fremont Planning Board. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved 2-0.

12. Carlson reported on an email from Marian Guidoboni regarding roadside cleanup; as well as an email Jeanne Nygren received from a Beede Hill Road resident. Guidoboni questioned the logistics of a roadside cleanup and safety measures. The Board discussed this as being a good idea, but the Town does not have the personnel to manage it nor cover the liability. Carlson could contact the Highway Department to see if they could pick up the bags so long as someone had also contacted Waste Management for the availability of disposal. The Town's only disposal means are toters and a very limited number of Town dumpsters.

Selectmen said they would need to have Ms Guidoboni coordinate a lot of things, such as when it could be done, whether the bags could go into a bulky day dumpster specifically for that purpose, what roads would be done, and who would supervise the effort, in addition to coordinating what help might be needed from the small town highway crew (2). Feedback will be sent to both parties inquiring as well as some questions posed to Waste Management and the Road Agent.

13. Selectmen reviewed the 2009 DRA Form MS-2, Statement of Appropriations, which had been completed using the default budget as presented for Town Meeting. The Board decided to wait until next week when the final, re-aligned numbers are in place and the form will represent the Town's appropriation plan as amended.

NEXT WEEK

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday April 9, 2009 at 6:00 pm. The Budget Committee meets on Wednesday April 8, 2009.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Gates and seconded by St Germain to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator